

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of examining a body cavity, the method comprising:
inserting an expandable device into the body cavity, the expandable device having a proximal end and a distal end and an inner and outer surface extending between the proximal and distal ends, and a lumen defined by the inner surface extending between the proximal end and the distal end, wherein the longitudinal length between the proximal and distal ends is greater than the maximum transverse dimension of either of the proximal and distal ends, and the outer surface between the proximal and distal ends has a maximum transverse dimension that is less than the maximum transverse dimension of either of the proximal and distal ends; and
expanding the expandable device within the body cavity, wherein expansion of the expandable device causes the outer surface between the proximal and distal ends to exert a force against a wall of the body cavity.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein expanding the expandable device comprises inflating at least one inflation chamber provided within the expandable device.
3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the proximal and distal ends of the expandable device each includes a supporting member.
4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the supporting members at each of the proximal and distal ends are expandable.
5. The method of Claim 4, comprising inflating the expandable supporting members with a fluid.
6. The method of Claim 5, wherein expanding the expandable device comprises separately inflating each of the supporting members.
7. The method of Claim 3, wherein expanding the expandable device comprises expanding a connection region extending between the supporting members.
8. The method of Claim 7, wherein expanding the connecting region comprises inflating a chamber provided between the inner and outer surfaces.
9. The method of Claim 8, expanding the expandable device further comprises inflating a chamber provided within each of the supporting members.

10. The method of Claim 9, wherein the chamber of the supporting member at the proximal end of the device and the chamber of the connecting region are in fluid communication.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein the chambers of the supporting member at the proximal end of the device and the connecting region are inflated separately from the chamber of the supporting member at the distal end of the device.

12. The method of Claim 1, further comprising delivering at least one medical instrument through the lumen.

13. The method of Claim 1, further comprising performing visualization through the lumen.

14. The method of Claim 1, further comprising deactuating the expandable device to a contracted configuration.

15. The method of Claim 14, wherein deactuating the expandable device comprises contracting at least the proximal end of the device prior to contracting the distal end of the device.

16. The method of Claim 1, wherein the body cavity is the vagina.

17. The method of Claim 1, wherein the body cavity is the cervix.

18. A method of inserting an expandable device into a body cavity, the expandable device having a proximal end and a distal end and a lumen extending therethrough, the method comprising:

inserting the expandable device and the applicator into a desired position with the body cavity, the expandable device being at least partially retained within a retaining portion of the applicator;

expanding the expandable device; and

withdrawing the applicator through the lumen of the expandable device.

19. The method of Claim 18, wherein the expandable device is an inflatable device.

20. The method of Claim 18, wherein the retaining portion comprises a curved portion formed at a distal end of the shaft portion.

21. The method of Claim 18, wherein the retaining portion comprises a retaining bell connected to a distal end of the shaft portion.

22. The method of Claim 18, wherein the retaining portion includes a finger cot having a retaining cavity and a tear-line.